

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 002289

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INL/LP, WHA/CEN, AND WHA/PPC

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/25/2013

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [KCRM](#) [KJUS](#) [PHUM](#) [ECON](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: COWABUNGA: TWO SEPARATE DRUG SEIZURES YIELD 13 KILOS OF HEROIN AND APPROXIMATELY 1,026 KILOS OF COCAINE

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 1497

Classified By: Political Chief Francisco Palmieri;
reasons 1.5(b) and (d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: On September 24, in two separate actions, Honduran police seized 13 kilos of heroin and approximately 1,026 kilos of cocaine. In both operations, Honduran authorities displayed unprecedented cooperation and coordination, working closely together and with U.S. counterdrug assets and State Department INL officials at Post. Already, Honduras has confiscated more cocaine this year (4,748 kilos) than in the last five years combined. The heroin seizure is the first significant heroin bust in the country's history. The Maduro administration's determination to combat drug traffickers can now be accurately characterized as a confirmed fact, as well as the Honduran military's committed participation for drug-interdiction operations. END SUMMARY

2. (C) The September 24 seizure of 13 kilos of heroin, with a U.S. street value of some USD 5 million, is the first significant heroine bust in Honduran history. The operation was a success due to highly coordinated cooperation between the INL-sponsored vetted unit and the Honduran Frontier Police. The vetted unit, having received intelligence that the heroin was being transported in a van, located the vehicle and then called in the Frontier Police to make the arrest.

3. (U) Along with the heroin, two suspects were apprehended: Jose Antonio Fajardo Enamorado of Honduras (46); and Mauricio Castillo Romero from Guatemala (24). The two men were arrested in the Department of El Paraiso, shortly after driving across the border from Nicaragua. According to press reports and Honduran authorities, both suspects were to be paid USD 6,000 per kilo for transporting the drugs. The heroin originated from Colombia, and Honduran authorities believe the drugs were connected to the same cartel associated with convicted PARLACEN Congressman Cesar Diaz (reftel). Diaz is currently serving a ten-year prison sentence in Nicaragua on narcotics trafficking charges.

4. (C) Separately, on the same day, Honduran authorities seized approximately 1,026 kilos of cocaine after a go-fast boat (originally tracked by SOUTHCOM's TAT assets) beached off Punto Gordo, on the north side of the Island of Roatan. The craft became tangled in mangroves after attempting to evade a Honduran Air Force helicopter that had been deployed to track it. The go-fast crew of five fled into the forest, abandoning its cargo. This latest confiscation brings the total amount of cocaine seized this year in Honduras to 4,748 kilos, more than the last five years combined.

5. (U) The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane, which had earlier that day assisted in the seizure of another go-fast with traces of cocaine, guarded the craft until Honduran authorities arrived on the scene.

6. (U) COMMENT: The cooperation between the U.S., the Honduran military, and the Honduran police is clear evidence that the Maduro administration is strongly committed to combating drug trafficking, directing its institutions to act accordingly. This cooperation represents a giant leap forward in Honduran determination to effectively interdict drugs transiting the country. END COMMENT.
Palmer